

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of April 14, 2008**

- I. **ROLL CALL:** Chair Roger LeClair, Selectmen Melvin Adams, Kenneth Johnson, Charles Morse, and Gregory Sanders. Also present were Town Manager Nanci Allard, Clerk Kenneth McCann, Warren Hagy, Jamie Demasi, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News & Transcript*).

Chair LeClair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. **March 24, 2008 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-2, with Selectmen Morse and Sanders abstaining.**
- b. **April 1, 2008 (Special Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Sanders, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-1, with Selectman Adams abstaining.**

III. **APPROVAL OF BILLS**

- a. **Warrant #20-08.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Sanders, to approve Warrant #20-08 in the amount of \$117,310.27. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

V. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

- a. **Status Reports: Various Projects**
 - 1. **Water Project.** Bids for the Water System Improvement Project (North Phase) came in much lower than expected. We are waiting for USDA approval before the bid is awarded to the low bidder.
 - 2. **Dog River Geomorphic Survey Project.** Bids for the project were opened last week. Members of the Northfield Conservation Commission are reviewing them with the State before the bid can be awarded.
 - 3. **Northfield/Norwich University Hazard Mitigation Plan.** The draft plan is now available for review at both the Northfield Municipal and Norwich University websites.
 - 4. **Pool Repair/Paint Project.** The only bid for this project was much higher than expected. The current plan is to find and repair the pool leak but hold off on other parts of the project, i.e. painting, until later.

VI. **SELECTBOARD**

- a. **2008 Liquor License Renewal Applications**
 - 1. **Grand Union Market.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Johnson, to approve the application. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
 - 2. **Rustic Restaurant.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Sanders, to approve the application. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **Grand Juror Appointment.** We have had two applicants for the vacant position. Each will be invited to a future meeting so that the Board can interview them in person.
- c. **Public Hearing (Police Station Bond Revote): April 28, 2008.** The public is strongly encouraged to attend.
- d. **Special Town Meeting (Police Station Bond Revote): May 6, 2008.** Voting will be held in the Northfield High School Lobby from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Prior to the vote, an informational mailing will be sent to Northfield taxpayers. The draft wording was then reviewed and some corrections made. Selectman Morse will be responsible for getting the final wording to the Manager so that the mailing can be done in a timely manner.

- e. **Status Reports: Various Projects.** The Selectmen had nothing to add.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items

- a. **Jamie Demasi: Bear Farm Road.** Mr. Demasi stated that the Class 4 section of Bear Farm Road needed to be repaired (regraded) as soon as possible, as there are some very bad spots where the mat has been exposed. He also made a formal request that the road be brought up to Class 3 standards as it is now too narrow to accommodate the new houses on the road. Currently, one vehicle needs to back up to let another vehicle come down the road. Given these new houses and the increased tax equity, the Board should put more money into Bear Farm Road than it has in the past. In addition, the new driveways that the Board allowed on the road have added to the problem. Culverts also need to be relocated. Selectman Adams noted that the Town paid to survey the road a couple years ago (as a prelude to working on the road) but Mr. Demasi subsequently did his own work on the road without the Board's permission. Mr. Demasi stated that he only widened a section of the road in order to allow for future improvements. He also stated that he had consulted a couple of attorneys and they had assured him that a property owner can do anything he or she wants in order to access his or her home. Selectman Johnson disagreed, stating that according to the Town's Highway Standards policy, permission must be obtained before work is done on a Town road. Selectman Morse added that this policy is to ensure that the work done is up to standard. Mr. Demasi then expressed his complete frustration with the actions that the Board has taken over the past few years. Before leaving the meeting, he repeatedly advised the Board to "Stay off my mountain!"

Mr. Demasi left at this time.

Selectman Adams, who also is a resident of Bear Farm Road, noted that the Town had to resurvey Bear Farm Road after Mr. Demasi did his unauthorized work on the road. In any case, Selectman Adams would like to see plans beforehand if any additional work is done on the road. He added that Mr. Demasi is correct in stating that there is a drainage problem on the road and he would like to see this addressed soon. Selectman Johnson stated that the Board was aware of this drainage problem but was waiting until springtime in order to fully evaluate it. Selectman Morse warned that the Board must face the reality of additional development on Bear Farm Road in the near future. He added that he generally supports such development, as it increases the Town's tax base, but is concerned in this instance that it would be done without proper planning and to the detriment of the community.

- b. **Kathleen Lott: West Hill Road.** Ms. Lott noted that many residents of West Hill Road have complained about its poor condition over the past week. Can nothing be done? Chair LeClair stated that the Highway Department was working on this road for much of the day. However, we have to be careful not to damage the road with heavy machinery. Ms. Lott wanted to know if the road would be accessible in an emergency. Manager Allard stated that all the police vehicles and ambulances have four-wheel drive so access to the road should not be a problem. In addition, if residents have medical appointments and are concerned about getting back and forth, they should contact the Town offices and the crew will go out and fix the road.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Selectman Johnson, seconded by Selectman Sanders, to adjourn.
Motion passed 5-0-0.

The Board adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting.